



A commitment to stewardship

March 7, 2019

The Laboratory recently published its current [Annual Site Environmental Report](#) (ASER), and a companion Summary Report, communicating the Laboratory's environmental performance, summarizing environmental occurrences and responses, confirming compliance with environmental standards and requirements, and highlighting significant programs and efforts.

"Los Alamos National Laboratory is committed to being good stewards of the Northern New Mexico environment," says Associate Laboratory Director Michael Hazen. "Protecting our workers, the public and the environment that has been entrusted to us is our highest priority."

Using the most recently-available data (from 2017), the ASER provides details of the results of environmental monitoring of air, surface water, groundwater, sediments, soils, plants, and animals performed at the Laboratory during a calendar year.

The Summary Report provides a nontechnical overview of the full ASER, highlighting the key findings and information, outlining the Laboratory's long-term stewardship strategy, and giving at-a-glance information on environmental protection, air quality, water quality, ecosystem health and radiation protection.

Key points include the restarting of shipping to the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) in Carlsbad, and the completion of the Laboratory's new Transuranic Waste Facility which enables the Lab to safely store and then ship transuranic waste to WIPP.

Upgraded Certification

The Laboratory has also upgraded its Environmental Management System certification to the new ISO 14001:2015 standard, with external audits ensuring the quality of the Laboratory's environmental performance.

One of the Laboratory's areas of focus is identifying opportunities to reduce or eliminate waste, emissions and effluent discharge. In the fiscal year 2017 the Lab recycled more than 615 tons of mixed paper, cardboard, plastic bottles and cans. It also recycled more than 970 tons of metals and more than 2000 pounds of batteries, while installing energy efficient LED light bulbs to replace high-pressure sodium vapor lamps and mercury vapor lamps outdoors.

The reports also cover how the Laboratory tracks endangered and threatened species, and conducts other wildlife monitoring and analysis to determine if Laboratory operations are affecting wildlife populations. In 2017 chemical concentrations in deer and elk, for example, were similar to or below background concentration.

Ensuring air and water quality

The Laboratory meets all air quality compliance requirements, and submits groundwater samples to an independent laboratory for analysis.

In 2017 drinking water from the Los Alamos County water supply and samples from the City of Santa Fe's Buckman well field met all federal and state standards.

Surface water quality and aquatic ecosystem health are also monitored, and the Laboratory was in compliance with Environmental Protection Agency regulations.

"Our environmental monitoring programs ensure we protect the vital natural resources for which we have responsibility," Hazen says. "We strive to be leaders in environmental stewardship and protect the environment of Northern New Mexico."

[> For more information on the Annual Site Environmental Report and the Summary Report, visit the Laboratory's Environmental website.](#)

Los Alamos National Laboratory

www.lanl.gov

(505) 667-7000

Los Alamos, NM

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